

Reading/Literacy Recommendations for KBE Priorities 2005-06

Priority. By including reading and literacy as a KBE priority, the Board concurs with the General Assembly that “reading proficiency is a gateway skill necessary for all Kentucky students to achieve the academic goals established in KRS 158.6451” (Read to Achieve Act of 2005). While the state Read to Achieve and the federal Reading First legislation focus on providing diagnostic and intervention services for struggling primary students, the KBE expands the goal that all children learn to read throughout all levels of education, preschool through secondary.

Current Status. Substantial resources have been dedicated to supporting reading programs at the primary level. Federal dollars fund 74 comprehensive reading programs in elementary schools and provide for professional development for all Kentucky teachers in scientifically-based reading instruction through Reading First. At the state level, the recently enacted Read to Achieve Act of 2005 provides on-going support for reading intervention programs at the primary level. This program is expected to expand over the next several years, with the intent to provide intervention services in every Kentucky elementary school.

Next Level. Financial resources and assistance to support reading achievement beyond the primary program have not been the focus. It is clear from Kentucky Core Content Test data that these resources are needed to ensure adolescent students are provided with the support they need to mirror the progress of students in the primary program.

KCCT Data.

Fourth Grade

Percent Proficient or Above

1999	56%
2000	57%
2001	58%
2002	60%
2003	62%
2004	66%

Seventh Grade

Percent Proficient or Above

1999	50%
2000	50%
2001	54%
2002	55%
2003	57%
2004	59%

Tenth Grade

Percent Proficient or Above

1999 23%

2000 27%

2001 29%

2002 28%

2003 31%

2004 34%

Kentucky Board of Education Role. The Board of Education has been a long-term advocate for reading and literacy, but to date the focus has been primarily on the youngest students. The KBE should continue to support reading initiatives for preschool and primary students while increasing their attention to adolescent readers.